**First Quarter Regional Research Team Meeting**

**Upper East Region**

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**April, 14th 2016**

**1.0 Introduction**

Africa RISING project in Ghana is a USAID funded project led by International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA). It is a research project into sustainable intensification and integration of natural resources to improve productivity, nutrition, income security and reduce hunger and poverty in smallholder families especially children and women. In the Upper East Region, the project is implemented in Bonia, Gia, Nyangua and Tekuru in the Kassena Nankana Municipality and in Samboligo in the Bongo District.

The Research Team Meeting took place 14th April 2016 at the conference hall of the Department of Food and Agriculture, Kassena Nankana Municipal Assemble. The meeting is organized quarterly to provide a platform for research team members and Stalk holders to interact and plan on Africa RISING project activities in the region to ensure smooth and participatory implementation and management of the project activities.

**2.0 Opening of meeting**

The Chairman, in the person of Alhaji Musbahu Ahmed (Former Regional Director, MoFA) welcomed the participants and outlined the objectives of the meeting which were

1. Brief members on the Dry Season Vegetable Hub
2. Discuss activities of partners on Africa RISING project for the 2015 season
3. Brief members on R4D platform activities and plans for 2016
4. Discuss 2016 mother, baby and up scaling trials

3.0 Presentation on dry season activities

The Africa RISING dry season vegetable activities in the two communities within the Kasena-Nankana Municipality were duly presented to members by Eliasu Salifu, acting regional coordinator of the Africa RISING Project. Discussions on fencing establishment and other equipment such as water pumps, water hose, drip kits and watering cans given to six lead farmers were made and presented as the project achievement for the first season.

It was also made known to members that unavailability of sufficient water for irrigating the crops due to low water table at the time of the project implementation was the main challenge and that the crops failed to perform due to that. The acting coordinator further explained that appropriate measures are being put in place to counteract any such challenge in subsequent seasons.

In responding to the question of Mr. Thomas Feladan on why the vegetable project is not being implemented in their community, the acting regional coordinator explained to the house that, the dry season vegetable activities had just begun and that the authorities will extend it to their communities when they find it necessary and appropriate.

Mr. Adugdaa Atiah David, a farmer from Samboligo appealed to the regional coordinating unit on behalf of the non-beneficiary communities (Gia, Bonia and Samboligo) of the vegetable hub to approach the appropriate authorities for the project to be extended to their various communities. The acting regional coordinator assured them that the appropriate authorities will be informed of their appeal.

**4.0 Activities of partners in Africa RISING project in 2015**

A brief presentation by Mr. Sadat (the Animal Research Institute representative at the meeting) was also given.

According to Mr. Sadat, Animal Research has started a Feed and Health Project on behalf of ILRI since November, 2014. From his presentation, two communities, Gia and Samboligo with ten data points are involved in the project. According to Mr. Sadat, data collection is in progress and members shall be informed when results are achieved.

**5.0 Presentation on 2016 Africa RISING activities (upscaling and baby trials)**

Due to the fact that the Planning Meeting to review activities of 2015 and to discuss that of 2016 had not been held as at the time meeting yet, much could not be said about the 2016 up scaling and baby trials.

**6.0 Discussion on MoFA activities**

Discussion was held about the manner MoFA collaborated with Africa RISING. According to Eliasu Salifu (acting project coordinator), it is necessary for MoFA staff to adopt a better reporting procedure. Instead of dealing directly with the Chief Scientist (Dr. Asamoah Larbi), MoFA staffs were advised to channel reports and fund requests through the Regional Coordinating Unit with a cover letter from MoFA Director for onward transmission to the Project Office in Tamale.

The AEAs present at the meeting also made a request that, the Project should provide an activity plan for 2016 to enable them plan effectively towards Africa RISING activities as well as enhance easy reporting. The District Directors were also advised by the Chairman (Alhaji Musbahu Ahmed) to always present to the Project, a copy of all reports submitted to the Assembly for reference sake.

**6.0 Discussion on R4D Platform activities**

The rationale for instituting the R4D platform was first explained to members by Mr. Edward Chinagia (the Chairman of R4D platform for Kassena Nankana). Mr. Edward explained that the R4D platform has been established to serve as a linkage between the Project and communities and also to help sustain implemented technologies within the communities when the AR project comes to an end. He explained further some of their developmental policies as follows:

1. R4D Platform to use the value chain concept to make farmers rich
2. R4D Platform to help acquire scholarship for students of intervention communities to enhance their knowledge in Agriculture
3. R4D Platform to engage women in dawadawa and baobab processing and other income generation activities.

Some achievements of the R4D platform in the Bongo District were also given by Madam Grace Anafo (Bongo R4D Chairperson)

According to Madam Grace, the Bongo R4D platform has engaged in programs such as:

1. Monitoring activities on storage processes that farmers had been taught or introduced to.
2. Training farmers on postharvest activities
3. Setting up groups to monitor the adoption of various technologies implemented in the community
4. Holding discussions with farmers with regards to AR activities on the livestock component.

Madam Grace also presented a petition on some challenges facing the platform in the district

According to her, the district still looks up to the Project for a vegetable hub establishment as promised to farmers within the district. Also they request that, some small ruminants are given to farmers in the district. Lastly, she asked that the platform is given funding to carry out their activities. These she says will help raise the moral of both farmers and platform members to carry out their functions as never before.

In response to madam Grace’s appeal, the acting coordinator assured participants that every appeal had been well noted and will be reported to the authorities.

**Closing Remarks**

The Chairman in his closing remarks, thanked all participants for attending. The meeting closed at 1:30pm local time.

**Annexes**

**Annex 1:** List of participants

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| **No** | **Name** | **Sex** | **Institution** |
| 1 | Sadat Salifu | M | CSIR - ARI |
| 2 | Cosmos Asaah | M | AEA Sambologo |
| 3 | Bertrand A. Nabare | M | ACDEP-Bolga |
| 4 | Martin Seguri | M | Contact Person, Nyangua |
| 5 | Adugdaa Atiah David | M | Farmer Samboligo |
| 6 | Abobim Emmanuel | M | MoFA Director, Bongo |
| 7 | Grace Anafo | F | R4D Chairperson, Bongo |
| 8 | Musbahu A. Ahmed | M | Project Assistant |
| 9 | Eliasu Salifu | M | Africa RISING |
| 10 | Richard Boateng | M | Africa RISING |
| 11 | Augustine Boakye Boateng | M | Africa RISING |
| 12 | Desire Naab Dickson | M | Africa RISING |
| 13 | Mark Bukari | M | Africa RISING |
| 14 | Chanagia Edward | M | R4D Chairman, Kassena Nankana |
| 15 | Thomas Feladam | M | Contact Person, Bonia |
| 16 | Clement Dimboe | M | Contact Person, Tekuru |
| 17 | Alhaji Musbahu Ahmed | M | Chairman |